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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Rural Electrification Administration  
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NEWSLETTER TOPICS

To Co-op Managers: Your newsletter should be kept on a strictly local plane if it is to do an effective member-relations job. "Newsletter Topics" is designed to give you helpful ideas for newsletter stories. If any of the copy included is adaptable to your use, it should be edited and given an intimate local touch. Increased reader interest on the part of your members will justify the effort.

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ELECTRICAL AIDS TO FEEDING PLANS  
(A thought for the month)

Electricity can help you carry out plans for more efficient feeding this year because of the shortage of grain for feed as compared to some recent years.

The U. S. Department of Agriculture estimates that hay supplies are generally favorable and, among other recommendations designed to save grain, suggests increased feeding of roughage, maximum use of pastures and care in protecting the health of all feed-consuming animals and fowls.

Water is an important factor in any feeding program, either for meat animals, dairy herds or poultry. Your electric water system will pump water to where it is needed easily and cheaply. Frost-proofed equipment and lines, with the aid of electric water warming devices at drinking outlets, will keep it flowing and will prevent it dropping below the desired temperatures--40 degrees for livestock and 50 degrees for poultry--even in sub-freezing weather.

Meat is about 60 percent water--milk 87 percent. Drinking outlets in pastures, feed lots and at stanchions in dairy barns will provide meat animals and dairy cows with all the fresh water they want. Convenient taps in the dairy barn and in the milk house simplify the job of maintaining top sanitary conditions by providing water for hosing, sterilization of milking and milk handling equipment, and for milk coolers, resulting in improved health for the cows and smaller losses from milk spoilage.

Both meat and dairy animals will probably eat more when they have all the water they want, but with it the former will maintain a steadier rate of growth and the latter will produce milk in maximum volume. They will be healthier, and their better appetites should make it possible to feed a higher percentage of good quality hay and other roughage without sacrificing weight gains or milk output.

An electric fence to divide pastures for more even grazing is simple to install, easy to move and inexpensive to operate. It is effective with all animals except sheep and goats. Use only tested and approved equipment. Home-made controls are too dangerous to risk.



Poultry flesh is 55 percent water--eggs 65 percent. The electric water system provides plenty of drinking water to promote maximum body growth and egg production. Birds that die represent a total loss of all feed they have consumed. Electricity helps prevent this by holding losses of chick and mature birds to a minimum through providing uniform heat in brooders, proper ventilation in poultry houses, running water for sanitation and by protecting the health of flocks in other ways. It also reduces egg losses due to spoilage between the nest and the market. Poultrymen using the electric debeaker have reported complete elimination of cannibalism--the cause of many deaths among birds---and feed savings as high as 20 percent.

Pig brooders save little pigs and prevent waste of the investment of feed already made in them.

Consult us about any problems you have concerning more efficient use of electricity in your home or on the farm. This is your co-op and any advice we can give you is yours for the asking.

(Note to Newsletter Editor: If you can add information about appliances available on the local market, plans for home-made equipment, etc., do so)

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#### IF KILOWATTS COULD TALK

Their message at this time might be: "We know a lot of folks who intended to install electrical brooders for their pigs and chicks last year but didn't get around to it. They struggled with their old fashioned methods all winter, losing pigs, losing chicks, losing rest, losing time from other tasks--all of which adds up to losing money--but they would not let us help. All we could do was skip along the line to the \_\_\_\_\_ pig brooders and \_\_\_\_\_ chick brooders that other folks on the system had installed so we could do the work for them. If you want us to take these jobs over for you this winter, use your heads for a few minutes now and save yourselves a lot of labor, worry and probably considerable money later on. Get those brooders, have them ready, then flip the switch when they are needed and we will do the rest."

Those who already have brooder equipment should get it in shape for service now. Farrowing time is near and deaths among little pigs is greater during that first few days after birth. A delay of just a few hours may cause the loss of a few pigs that would grow into a quarter-ton or more pork at marketing time. Have those pig brooders ready to be switched on in advance of the event. Inspect chick brooders thoroughly, make all needed repairs--including replacement of all parts that even look doubtful--and test them in advance. Both brooders and brooder houses should be ready when those baby chicks arrive.

(NOTE TO NEWSLETTER EDITOR: If you do not have the actual count, estimate the numbers of pig and chick brooders on your system lines. Add a paragraph about local supplies of brooders, materials for building them and where they can get plans.)

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SOME EXAMPLES OF GOOD NEWSLETTER STORIES

FACTS WORTH NOTING: (Here is the way the Illinois Rural Electric Company of Winchester, prepared a fine story on a very important subject.) There is a section of line on the Cooperative's system that has never given trouble. Outages on it are very rare, and we note that our complaint file has only one or two letters from members on this section of line, and these letters contain complaints of a very minor nature.

A trip over this section of line reveals some very interesting facts. We noted that all fence rows were clear of brush, trees and hedge. We also noted that wherever a guy wire extended into a pasture most of the members had built fences around them to keep the stock from rubbing the guys, which causes trouble at times. We saw that wherever the members had desired to save shade trees, they had let the Cooperative build the line out in the fields or pasture to get around the shade trees in such a manner that these trees could grow all they wanted to and still wouldn't interfere with their service.

We talked to the members on this section of line, and we found that they knew the Cooperative belonged to them, and that the lines were built for them. They told us that they were proud of the Cooperative and the good service it had provided them with and that they would always do their part to help their cooperative maintain such service.

On our way back to the office we felt good, as we always do after talking to these kind of members, but we couldn't help but wonder -- here was a group of approximately 100 farmers who knew why the Cooperative was organized, who knew the struggle which their Cooperative had gone through in the beginning to make electric service available to them. They understood the things that they could do, and did to help their Cooperative give them the best service. They understood that their Cooperative had cut expenses in every possible way in order to maintain electric rates on the farm at the same rate that it was before the war, in spite of an increase in fuel rates, labor costs, material cost, etc., that had increased the expenses of operation about 40%. These farmers had put something into their Cooperative, and in return they, through their own personal efforts, had created conditions on their line that had made it possible to give them as near perfect service as they could get from any source.

If we could only get this story to the rest of our members, and make them realize some way, that they, too, can help improve their service and cut expenses in the same manner that this group of farmers had, and if our membership would do this 100%, then this Cooperative could cut their rates sufficiently to make them the lowest electrical rates in the country. Is it possible? Only our members can answer this question.

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YOUR ANNUAL MEETING: (Members of the Prairie Power Cooperative, Inc., of Fairfield, Idaho, get a "honey" reminder of their personal interest in their co-op.) In a few more weeks, the Annual Meeting will roll around. On November 8th, the 6th Annual Meeting of your Cooperative will be held and as a member-owner it is your duty to attend. It is hoped that no one will consider it a duty to attend but please arrange to come any way. Everyone seems to have a good time.

Our meetings are a little bigger each year but not enough of the members attend. Why not make this meeting a 100% attendance? Also, we always notice that the same folks come each year but very few new ones. The place to get the facts about your Cooperative is at an open meeting as the Annual Meeting, and not from the guy on the sidewalk. Usually this guy who is "spouting off" against Co-ops, REA or your Prairie Power Co-op, doesn't know anymore about the facts than a Ubangi from the heart of Africa. Surely now, member, you must have a question about the operations of your Co-op, so why not come to the meeting and get the facts and answers to your questions?

You, as a member of this Cooperative, have good reason to be kind of proud of your system, for the completion of the "B" Section will mean that over 96% of the farm homes in all of Camas Prairie will have electricity, which is a mark for any utility to shoot at.

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MANAGERS REPORT: (Manager Mulkey, of the Middle Georgia Electric Membership Corporation at Vienna, talks across the fireside to the home folks.) Your Co-op has done some growing up since March and April, 1941, when the lines were first turned on. Back in those days, the bookkeeper, one lineman and myself could "hold down the fort." The Co-op now has twelve employees, some four trucks, and is selling more electricity to more members than it ever has before. Uncle Sam recently called on the Co-op to begin repaying the money the Co-op borrowed. Your Co-op is meeting these payments promptly. The Co-op has paid interest on the money borrowed since 1941, payments on the principal started the first of the year. The Co-op's future looks good. Over 600 miles of line must be built before all the rural homes in the Co-op's area will be served. The Co-op has the money available to build this additional line, the material has been ordered, the necessary preliminary engineering work has been done and I know of nothing else the Board of Directors or myself can do to hurry up the construction of this line that will serve 2500 rural homes now without electric service in this area. All we need is the material. So many of you have been adding electric pumps, water heaters, stoves, and motors to the lines that our engineers advised us the first of the year to secure more power from the Georgia Power Company. They have promised us another substation between Pitts and Rochelle and one near Wallace in Pulaski County. If things move on schedule, this additional power will be available around October 1st. We are anxious to give you the best service possible and you will always find us ready and willing to discuss any suggestions you may have.

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